

Minneapolis Healthy Food Shelf Network

Facilitated by the Minneapolis Health Department

Thursday, April 25, 2013

10:00 – 11:30am

**Location: MN FoodShare/Division of Indian Work
(1001 E Lake St, Minneapolis)**



Participants

- Donna Bonicatto – Salvation Army Center City Office food shelf
- Dave Glenn – Minnesota Project
- Jessica Hering – Salvation Army NEED food shelf
- Laura Skubric – EFN
- Karena Johnson – EFN
- Rachel Henderson – Waite House food shelf
- Francisco Segovia – Waite House food shelf
- Jacob Schuster – Catholic Charities food shelf
- Jen Schultz – Little Kitchen food shelf
- Sara Nelson-Pallmeyer – MN FoodShare
- Courtney – MN FoodShare
- Lisa Boyd – Second Harvest Heartland
- Pa lee Yang – CAPI food shelf
- Fay McLain – University of MN Extension
- Siri Simons – Minneapolis Health Department
- Vish Vasani – Minneapolis Health Department
- Kristen Klingler – Minneapolis Health Department

Meeting Notes

Spotlight on MN FoodShare and the Division of Indian Work food shelf

Information was presented on **MN FoodShare** and current operations.

- MN FoodShare advocates on hunger issues and runs an annual “March Campaign” to raise money for food shelves and hunger organizations.
 - Supporting current legislative action at the State Capitol that would provide \$1 million appropriation for food shelves.
 - Also working at the state level to ensure that children at schools aren’t turned away when parents haven’t paid for reduced-price lunches. Trying to make it unallowable to turn kids away (currently 20% of school districts do not allow free lunch).
 - Advocacy in Washington with MN legislators re: SNAP.
- MN FoodShare partners with the Garden Gleaning Project to support people growing food for food shelves. Focus is on congregations and starting to look at MPHA land that might be available for growing food.

- Recently hired Courtney – new .5 PTE position – she will be working on encouraging congregations to grow food.

Division of Indian Work food shelf (co-located with MN FoodShare) –

- The food shelf focuses on serving the American Indian population. Their efforts are focused on trying to get culturally specific foods into the food shelf while balancing health & nutrition needs. Through various partnerships, they are also looking at land that might be available for their community members to use for growing food.

University of MN - Extension

- Recently created a new category of volunteers called “Master Food Volunteer” – these people could be a great benefit to food shelves or meal programs. They are required to do 40 hours of service to community – which could include education, planning, or outreach. Fay McLain will get more information out to those who are interested.

Second Harvest Heartland (SHH) letter

Partners reviewed draft letter and key recommendations. Lisa Boyd from Second Harvest provided feedback on how to frame the issues before meeting with other leaders. Overall, it was suggested that the letter be framed in a “we need these types of things, and these types of things are what we will buy from you” way, instead of demanding changes. Food shelf partners will reconvene separately to finalize talking points and determine course of action. Jennifer S., Amano D., and Rachel H., are interested in pursuing a conversation with SHH leaders. Other food shelves can volunteer to participate if they are interested too.

- Sharing food products in general – Second Harvest is required to follow Feeding America rules for food banks. In the past, there were cases of abuse which got donors in trouble and caused the rules to become more strict.
 - SHH could explore a more flexible policy and provide oversight if food shelves (that are SHH members) want to share produce pallets. There have already been internal conversations about this, so this is a good recommendation to make as a Network.
- Consistency of produce quality and availability
 - SHH has been receiving and passing along donations of fresh produce for quite some time, but as this food stream increases and begins to take the place of shelf stable food donations that are decreasing, it is a “work in progress” on how best to manage the large quantities and the optimal way to pass these large donations of fresh produce on to food shelves.
 - Recommendation to separate these 2 recommendations since they are viewed separately by SHH leaders (i.e. 1st recommendation is to ensure quality of produce is consistently high; 2nd recommendation is to ensure that produce is available consistently)
- Purchases and donations of healthy food products
 - Recommendation to again separate out these 2 issues: SHH is “sourcer” of food, not “donor” – but they do have a food purchasing budget and they might be open to suggestions for how they can use their \$ to buy more healthy items. The food they get donated will be harder to control.

- Their inventory is based on demand from food shelves, so they need to see that food shelves are buying/requesting only healthy items in order to make changes
- The Network is likely to meet with resistance if we tell SHH to refuse unhealthy donations. Food shelf partners were still interested in pushing back on these issues.

Garden Gleaning Project's Toolkit

- Dave Glenn distributed copies of the toolkit to all food shelves at the meeting. Additional copies can be ordered online through their website: <http://gardengleaning.org/2013/03/05/garden-gleaning-toolkit/>.
- The group briefly reviewed the toolkit content which includes resources and instructions for food shelves and gardeners. A key component to successful gleaning relationships with food shelves and gardeners is to hire a part-time coordinator. Food shelves might want to explore how to collectively apply for Hunger-Free MN grants for this purpose.

Giving Gardens

- Vish Vasani reviewed the health department's proposed work plan to reach out to organizations interested in starting "giving gardens" to donate to food shelves. The health department would play a connecting role (connect food shelves to existing resources that are already working on this issue).
- Alternatively, if organizations are not willing or able to start a giving garden, the health department will encourage cash donations and healthy food drives.
- Initially, we need assistance in figuring out which organizations in Minneapolis to reach out to. Ideas from the group included:
 - U of M Extension is involved in children's gardens – may be a good connection, way to involve kids w/harvest.
 - Boy & Girl Scouts – EFN has worked with them on food drive; they may be interested in doing a service learning project related to gardening but not sure if they have land available
 - Urban 4-H – could be interested in working on this for service learning projects
 - GGP has reached out to Youth Farm successfully
 - Land is a problem – maybe connect to city-owned lots that are available
 - Tamales y Bicicletas – will do mapping of available land in South Mpls/Phillips (in a few months)